# “I WAS RAISED NOT DISCRIMINATING AT ALL”
# HOW ANTI-WHITE DISCRIMINATION REPORTERS USE MARGINALIZED PRIVILEGE

Madeleine George Straubel

A thesis submitted to the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Sociology Department.

Chapel Hill
2020

Approved by:

Karolyn Tyson

Andrew Perrin

Mosi Ifatunji

## ABSTRACT

Madeleine George Straubel: "I Was Raised Not Discriminating at All": How Anti-White Discrimination Reporters Use Marginalized Privilege
(Under the direction of Karolyn Tyson)

Many White Americans report racial discrimination against White people. While we know what White people mean when they report anti-White discrimination, no interview studies have focused on anti-White discrimination reporters, and so we lack data on how they explain and contextualize their experiences. Using narrative frame analysis of original interviews with 25 anti-White discrimination reporters, this paper identifies how a "get over it" or "victimhood" narrative frame characterized respondents' reports. Participants deployed one or more defensive moral tropes, or the rhetorical strategies used to guard their sense of themselves as good people against the threat of being perceived as racist. They used anti-White discrimination narrative frames and defensive moral tropes to deploy marginalized privilege, which is when members of a privileged group claim for themselves the perceived benefits of minoritized group membership, such as reporting discrimination. Thus, they maintain their sense of themselves as good people while reporting anti-White discrimination.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I write with the deepest gratitude for my committee: Professor Karolyn Tyson, my advisor and committee chair, Professor Mosi Ifatunji, and Professor Andy Perrin. Without their guidance, this master's thesis quite simply would not have been possible. Particular thanks to Karolyn for guiding me on the long path of qualitative research, as well as to Andy and Mosi for access to their survey sample. I am grateful to all three for their mentorship. I would also like to thank my respondents for the gift of their time. While we rarely agreed on a range of issues, they took a leap of faith to interview with me, and I have done my best to represent them respectfully. Additionally, I thank family members, friends, and two respondents whose contacts became pilot and case interviewees. Thanks also go to the Sociology Department for partial funding to support participant incentives and travel expenses. I am indebted to the many friends and colleagues who have engaged with me about these ideas throughout proposing this study, collecting data, and writing up the findings. My parents, Marjorie George and Mark Straubel, and my sister, Miranda Straubel, have held me up with love and support through the very steep learning curve that is the early years of graduate school. This project was also made possible by my grandmother, Peggy George, whose gift of a used car enabled me to conduct interviews across the state. I write with gratitude and humility as the recipient of intergenerational wealth, which remains unspoken too often in our business of knowledge production. Words cannot express the gratitude I hold for my husband, Daniel Hood, who has believed in me even when I did not believe in myself, and whose love, support, and partnership mean more to me than I can say.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

# INTRODUCTION

In a tense political moment characterized by nationwide conversations about race (Hunter 2017), a nationally representative survey found that 55 percent of White Americans reported that racial discrimination occurs against White people in the United States today (Blendon et al. 2017). While a small percentage of White Americans have reported experiencing firsthand racial discrimination since they were first asked in 1991 (Smith et al. 2018), this majority of White people reporting racial discrimination attracted widespread national attention (Gonyea 2017). This finding also surprised some scholars, given well-documented discrimination against Black people and other people of color (Essed 1990, 1991; Williams 1999; Williams et al. 1997) and theories of structural racism benefitting White people at the expense of people of color (Blumer 1958; Bonilla-Silva 1997, 2018; Cox 1959). While we know much of what White people mean when they report racial discrimination, or what I call "anti-White discrimination," no interview studies have focused directly on anti-White discrimination reporters, and so we lack data on how they explain and contextualize their experiences. To address this gap, I interviewed 25 older White Southerners who had reported anti-White discrimination to identify the different narrative frames—the constructed stories by which people make sense of their lives (Goffman 1986; Hart 1992)—that they used when talking about anti-White discrimination.

We already know much of what White people mean when they report discrimination against themselves or their racial group. Some White people report reverse discrimination, or the perception that contemporary affirmative action policies are discriminatory against White people

(Bonilla-Silva, Lewis, and Embrick 2004; DiAngelo 2018; DiTomaso 2013; Fraser and Kick 2000; Pincus 2003). However, recent survey findings show that White people's reports of racial discrimination encompass more than opposition to affirmative action and are more widespread than previously known (Blendon et al. 2017). Research on White working-class people documents a long history of anti-White discrimination reporting (Fine et al. 1997; Gest 2016; Hochschild 2016), while interview studies of White racial attitudes find that White people not only oppose affirmative action but also identify minority-only spaces, their fears of violence from Black men, and social scapegoating as racially discriminatory (Bucholtz 2011; Cabrera 2014; Feagin and O'Brien 2003). Finally, a study of dominant group members' firsthand discrimination reports finds that White people report feelings of victimhood, challenges upon entering non-White spaces, and instances where people of color held more power as anti-White discrimination (Camara and Orbe 2011).

While we know what White Americans mean when they report anti-White discrimination, we lack information about how they explain and contextualize their experiences. To the best of my knowledge, this project is the first interview study to take anti-White discrimination as its primary focus, and it is also the first study to recruit and interview White people who reported anti-White discrimination on a prior survey. Other studies have collected White people's discrimination reports as the first point of contact (Camara and Orbe 2011; DiTomaso 2013; Fraser and Kick 2000; Mayrl and Saperstein 2013; Pincus 2003) or received that information incidentally in pursuit of other data about White people (Bonilla-Silva et al. 2004; Bucholtz 2011; Cabrera 2014; DiAngelo 2011; Feagin and O'Brien 2003; Gest 2016). Directly investigating anti-White discrimination allowed me to conduct a narrative frame analysis, going beyond the "what" to the "how" of anti-White discrimination reports.

In this paper I ask, how do White people who have reported anti-White discrimination tell their stories? What narrative frames do they use to convey their experiences with and perspectives on anti-White discrimination? How do they explain and contextualize anti-White discrimination? To answer these questions, I draw on data from semi-structured, in-depth interviews I conducted in 2019 with 25 White adults over the age of 55 who live in the Southern United States. Of these 25 White Southerners, 21 were registered North Carolina voters who reported racial discrimination on a telephone political opinion survey in fall 2018 (Perrin and Ifatunji 2018), two were recruited through snowball sampling, and two were identified through my own social networks. Drawing from inductive and deductive techniques, I will use a narrative frame analysis to show how interviewees' stories of anti-White discrimination were characterized by a "get over it" narrative frame or a "victimhood" narrative frame, largely corresponding to whether they reported that White people experience the same amount of or more discrimination than other racial groups, respectively. Both narrative frames were accompanied by defensive moral tropes, or the rhetorical strategies participants used to guard their sense of themselves as good people against the threat of being perceived as racist; this paper is the first to identify the moral dimensions of anti-White discrimination reports. I will then argue that these older White Southerners used anti-White discrimination narrative frames and defensive moral tropes to deploy marginalized privilege, which is when members of a privileged group, such as White people, claim for themselves what they perceive to be the benefits of minoritized group membership, such as reporting discrimination. In so doing, they maintain their sense of themselves as good people while reporting anti-White discrimination.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

We know many of the events, policies, and circumstances that White people consider discriminatory from literature on reverse discrimination, White racial ideologies, White working-class people, and White racial attitudes, as well as a few studies directly analyzing anti-White discrimination. We still lack, however, information on how anti-White discrimination reporters explain and contextualize their experiences with discrimination, which we can learn from a direct focus on this discrimination combined with a narrative frame approach.

### *Anti-White Discrimination vs. Reverse Discrimination*

Following Barbara Reskin, racial discrimination is the "unwarranted differential treatment of persons based on group membership" (2012:19). This definition includes the key word "unwarranted," which captures the contested nature of racial discrimination. Reports of racial discrimination can be grouped into two categories: racial discrimination perceived at the individual level (e.g., firsthand unfair treatment) and racial discrimination perceived at the group level (e.g., thinking that other group members are treated unfairly) (Taylor et al. 1990; Taylor, Wright, and Porter 1993). Throughout this paper, I use the term "anti-White discrimination" to refer to when White people report racial discrimination against themselves or their racial group. I distinguish this concept from "reverse discrimination," which refers specifically to White people's objections to affirmative action (Mayrl and Saperstein 2013; Pincus 2003).

*Reverse Discrimination and Affirmative Action*

Some White people report a type of discrimination commonly known as "reverse discrimination," which describes the perceived negative consequences of affirmative action for White people, particularly in the United States (Mayrl and Saperstein 2013; Pincus 2003). Affirmative action refers to "redistributive racial [and gendered] policy" (Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996:477) that counteracts some of the consequences of systemic racism and sexism in higher education and the workforce (Orlans 1992; Reskin 1998). Interview studies find that White people who report reverse discrimination lack clarity about what these policies entail and misunderstand the power dynamics of race relations. Fred Pincus (2000, 2002, 2003) conducted telephone interviews with White Americans recruited via advertisements in anti-affirmative action publications and websites, finding that they were more concerned with promotion and firing than hiring and quotas. Interviewees stated—frequently without evidence when pressed—that a less qualified minority, often an unidentified Black man, had achieved a spot they felt they deserved. In a study of White people's perspectives on racial inequality, the few White adults who reported reverse discrimination in work settings employed unclear conceptualizations of affirmative action, discrimination, and the government's role in these policies (DiTomaso 2013). Lastly, White university students and faculty opposed to race-conscious employment and education policies framed racial discrimination against minorities as a relic of the past, seeing race-conscious policies as subverting meritocracy and constituting reverse discrimination (Fraser and Kick 2000).

Reports of reverse discrimination also appear in research that focuses on other elements of White discontent. For example, in their study of White racial ideology, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva and colleagues report that participants' colorblind storylines included "I did not get a job (or a

promotion or was admitted to a college) because of a Black man" (2004:567), a clear example of White people reporting reverse discrimination. The authors also find that their respondents employed two types of what they refer to as "testimonies" (2004:570)—(1) disclosing knowledge of a close person who is racist and (2) positive or negative interactions with Black people. Using these testimonies ultimately reinforces colorblind racial ideology by allowing respondents to save face while dismissing racial inequality. In another case, Robin DiAngelo opens her article on White fragility with an account of reverse discrimination. She describes an anti-racism training in which a White man grew enraged over her definition of racism as one in which White people hold power over people of color (DiAngelo 2011:54). In a room of 40 employed White adults and one employed person of color (DiAngelo's fellow presenter) the man yelled, "White people have been discriminated against for 25 years! A white person can't get a job anymore!" (2011:54). DiAngelo expands her work on White fragility in her subsequent book (2018), arguing that White people insulate themselves from racial discomfort. White people respond to any racial discomfort that does enter their lives by distancing themselves from the bad actor racist, or someone who engages in "simple, isolated, and extreme acts of prejudice" (2018:71), to maintain their sense of themselves as not racist and therefore morally good. These studies clarify what some White people mean when they report reverse discrimination; however, other scholarship suggests that anti-White discrimination is fairly widespread across White Americans and broader than opposition to affirmative action.

*Anti-White Discrimination: Beyond Affirmative Action*

Research shows that anti-White discrimination reports are more widespread than previously known. A recent nationally representative survey of discrimination trends finds that 55 percent of White Americans stated that racial discrimination exists against White people in

the United States today, while 43 percent disagreed with this statement (Blendon et al. 2017). White Republicans, White people without a college degree, White people with an annual income between $25,000 and $49,999, and White people living in the South were more likely than their counterparts to report discrimination. Of all White respondents, between 11 and 19 percent reported firsthand experience with different forms of institutional discrimination (hiring, pay/promotion, and college admissions), while between 7 and 23 percent reported firsthand experience with different forms of individual discrimination (slurs, comments/assumptions, and others' fear). Contemporary anti-White discrimination reporters across the United States are describing a range of discriminatory actions that go beyond reverse discrimination.

Scholarship on White working-class people and White racial attitudes contains multiple references to anti-White discrimination and together helps us understand what White people mean when they report this discrimination. Studies focused on the political views, economic prospects, and identities of working-class White people reveal perceptions of anti-White discrimination. In an ethnography of White Louisianan Tea Party supporters, Arlie Hochschild (2016) describes what she calls their "deep story"—that then-President Obama was waving Black people, women, immigrants, refugees, and environmentalists into line ahead of them. Hochschild's respondents' deep story looks very similar to reports of anti-White discrimination. Similarly, Justin Gest (2016) shows that White working class people's experiences of deprivation in the Midwest led to a feeling of "minoritization," or a perception of lost status, reduced numbers, and minoritized groups surpassing White success while exploiting government resources. As Gest explains, "many white working class people feel like the victims of discrimination" (2016:15–16). Such feelings are not new. Michelle Fine and colleagues (1997) find that poor and working-class White boys and men reported in the late 1980s and early 1990s

they had become “the new minority” because the Civil Rights Movement had gone too far in government policies like affirmative action and welfare. From these studies, we see a long-standing theme of working-class White people reporting anti-White discrimination.

Interview studies of White racial attitudes among adolescent, college-age, and adult White people provide additional evidence of what White people mean by anti-White discrimination. In a study of gendered ideologies within race talk, White high school boys’ conversations about racial conflict were characterized by their resentment of perceived institutional favoritism toward their Black peers and by their fear of direct persecution from Black students (Bucholtz 2011). Analysis of White male college students’ racial views finds that they define affirmative action policies, campus groups organized around race and ethnicity, experiences of teasing, and their own feelings of discomfort around racial minorities as reverse racism (Cabrera 2014). Finally, research on upper middle-class White men’s racial attitudes identifies a series of Whiteness perspectives, including one perspective of racial discrimination that respondents attributed to affirmative action policies and firsthand social scapegoating (Feagin and O’Brien 2003). While research on reverse discrimination, White working-class people, and White racial attitudes together identifies what White people mean when they report racial discrimination, these studies do not focus directly on anti-White discrimination and so do not identify how anti-White discrimination reporters explain and contextualize their experiences.

To my knowledge, only two studies directly investigate White Americans’ reports of anti-White discrimination. One study finds that White Evangelical Protestants in the Southern United States were significantly more likely to report at least one firsthand experience of anti-White discrimination in the past three years (Mayrl and Saperstein 2013). Outside of the South, however, political affiliation trumped religious affiliation, such that White Republicans in the

rest of the country were significantly more likely to report experiencing discrimination. The researchers conclude that these religious and political institutions may encourage White people already inclined to report anti-White discrimination to do so. Another study used an open-ended survey to analyze discrimination narratives from members of multiple dominant groups, including male, heterosexual, White, able-bodied, and young people (Camara and Orbe 2011). They find that White respondents' accounts of firsthand discrimination included feeling like targeted victims, being challenged upon entering non-White spaces, and encountering instances where people of color held more power than they did.

The literature on reverse discrimination, White racial ideologies, White working-class people, White racial attitudes, and anti-White discrimination together describe anti-White discrimination, but no interview studies have directly focused on anti-White discrimination reporters and the stories that they tell. While we understand the events, policies, and circumstances White Americans reference when they report anti-White discrimination, we still lack information on how they explain and contextualize their experiences. Given this knowledge gap, I ask, how do White people who have reported anti-White discrimination tell their stories? What narrative frames, or the constructed stories by which people make sense of their lives (Goffman 1986; Hart 1992), do they use to convey their experiences with and perspectives on anti-White discrimination? How do they explain and contextualize anti-White discrimination?

## DATA AND METHODS

To address these research questions, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews in person and over the phone with 25 White interviewees. With this methodological approach, I was able to collect data on how interviewees understand the world around them, while also allowing space for unexpected themes to emerge (Arksey and Knight 1999). Although a survey instrument can capture participants' basic anti-White discrimination narratives, semi-structured interviews are ideal for using a narrative frame analysis to understand how participants explain their experiences. Narrative frames derive from Erving Goffman and Janet Hart: frames are the ways in which individuals organize and make sense of their experiences (Goffman 1986), while narratives are a constructed source of data that can be authored by experts and non-experts alike (Hart 1992). Thus, narrative frames are the constructed stories by which people make sense of their lives. In-depth interviews also draw out the deep, contextualized nature of opinions. The "walking file drawer" assumption states that individuals consistently carry around a set of fully formed, static public opinions (Cook and Flay 1978; Petty and Cacioppo 1996; Sherif and Cantril 1947). Instead, evidence suggests that people's opinions are context-specific and constructed in response to a variety of influences (Perrin and McFarland 2011; Wilson and Hodges 1992; Zaller 1992). Follow-up and probing questions invite respondents to reconsider their opinions and verify, alter, or further contextualize them, providing richer data than a closed or open-ended survey. Taken together, the narrative frame approach and the semi-structured interview move

past the "what" of anti-White discrimination reports to shed light on the "how" of this racial phenomenon.

The following sections outline the recruitment strategy, characteristics of the cases, interview protocol, and analytic strategy.

*Recruitment Strategy*

I recruited 25 older White Southerners who reported anti-White discrimination against themselves and/or their racial group. Of these 25 White Southerners, 21 are registered North Carolina voters who reported this discrimination on a political opinion telephone survey in fall 2018, right before the U.S. midterm elections (Perrin and Ifatunji 2018). During the survey, 500 randomly selected voters were asked 22 questions, including the following two.

1. How much discrimination have you personally experienced because of your race or ethnicity, a lot, some, or none at all? If you have experienced a lot of discrimination because of your race or ethnicity, press 1. If you've experienced only some discrimination, press 2. If none at all, press 3. If you're not sure, press 4.
2. Overall, do you believe people of your racial or ethnic group suffer more or less discrimination than people in other groups, or about the same? If you believe people of your racial or ethnic group suffer more discrimination than others, press 1. If you believe they experience less discrimination, press 2. If you believe they experience about the same as others, press 3. If you're not sure, press 4.

Self-reported White respondents who answered "a lot" or "some" on question one *and/or* who answered "more than" or "about the same as" on question two were treated as anti-White discrimination reporters. Following IRB approval, I received a 50 percent stratified sample of 31 men and 31 women who met these criteria, along with four replacement names when I discovered some duplicate entries. Replacement individuals matched on gender in all cases and on state region (mountains, piedmont, and coastal plains) where possible. Appendix A reports respondents' answers to the two survey questions, while Appendices B and C compare survey answers to respondents' characteristics. Relatively few interviewees reported personal experiences with anti-White discrimination, and a substantial majority of respondents reported

that White people experience the same amount of discrimination as other racial groups. A handful of participants reported that White people experience more discrimination than other groups.

I recruited respondents from the stratified sample through a combination of cold calls and mailed invitations. Fourteen respondents entered the study after a cold call, two after a cold call plus a requested mailed invitation, and five after mailed invitations. One snowball participant also requested a mailed invitation. Mailed invitations were printed on Department letterhead, mailed in Department envelopes, and contained one of my business cards. When discussing the study over the phone and in person, I explained to all prospective participants that the interview would be about "politics and discrimination." All interviewees received a $15 Amazon gift card at the end of the interview, although not all respondents were notified in advance that they would receive a gift card. The gift card appeared to have a limited effect on recruitment, as many interviewees were retired and financially stable, but it provided a reasonable incentive in some cases and respondents generally appreciated the gesture. Of the 62 individuals in the stratified sample, 21 agreed to and completed an interview, for a response rate of 34%.

Of the remaining four respondents, two were identified through social networks, and two were recruited through snowball sampling. One social network respondent answered a family friend's Facebook post specifically asking for people who believe they have been discriminated against because they are White, while the other social network respondent agreed to participate after receiving a different family friend's email that included my call for White people who report discrimination against themselves or their racial group. One of the 21 survey interviewees recommended the first snowball member, who in turn recommended the second snowball member. Based on interview content, I am confident that all four meet the criteria of being older

White Southerners who report anti-White discrimination; however, given this variation in subject recruitment, I first developed the narrative frame analysis with the 21 telephone survey respondents and then verified that this framework aligned with the four other participants' data. I recruited to saturation, or when interviews no longer generated new themes of interest (Small 2009). Saturation was not determined solely by the two snowball participants' data given the likelihood that those data would be similar (Small 2009).

*Characteristics of the Cases*

Appendices D and E detail self-reported characteristics from the brief post-interview questionnaire available in Appendix F and from interview content, respectively. All respondents, except for one who lives in another Southern state, live in North Carolina and range from the Western mountains to the coast. While seven interviewees were born outside of the state, I use the term "Southerners" since all participants permanently reside in the South and have done so for a long time. Respondents were just under two-thirds male, majority over 70 years old, better educated when compared to a national survey of anti-White discrimination reporters (Blendon et al. 2017), majority Republican, majority Southern-born, and majority consumers of at least some right-leaning news media. I suspect that older White men were more likely to respond to my invitation than older White women because these men had worked outside of the home and may have felt more comfortable responding to a stranger's request to meet and talk than their female peers who had worked outside of the home in fewer cases.

*Interview Protocol*

In keeping with the iterative nature of qualitative work (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 2011; Spradley 1980), the interview guide evolved over the course of data collection; however, every interview covered three major categories of open-ended questions (Arksey and Knight 1999).

These categories consisted of interviewees' life histories (Bertaux 1981), including childhood, education, career trajectory, family, and personal interests; political opinions, including questions covering racially charged topics, such as affirmative action and immigration; and discrimination, often against both White and minoritized people. The life history questions, such as respondents' hometowns and early childhood memories, served as "icebreaker" questions to build rapport and respondents' comfort with the setting (Arksey and Knight 1999). Most interviews occurred in the order of life history questions, political opinions, and discrimination questions, while a few deviated from that format as I followed respondents' answers to questions (Arksey and Knight 1999). Questions about respondents' racial attitudes and some political opinion questions were taken from the General Social Survey (Smith et al. 2018).

Prior to launching primary data collection, I evaluated questions' effectiveness and practiced my interview posture in three pilot interviews, and I continued to modify my questions and approach during primary data collection as needed in response to feedback. Changes to the interview guide involved editing or dropping the questions that respondents did not understand or that did not generate data of interest, and then adding replacement questions that better addressed anti-White discrimination. The most significant change was adding open-ended versions of the political opinion telephone survey questions about discrimination after my sixth interview, and this modification altered the interviews only in that it better prompted interviewees to talk in depth about anti-White discrimination. The change did not influence my findings about anti-White discrimination narrative frames and defensive moral tropes, which appeared consistently before and after implementation. Appendix G includes the latest version of the interview guide.

Given sufficient rapport, I sometimes responded to interviewees' answers with challenging and/or contradictory questions to avoid the pitfalls of the "walking file drawer" assumption that opinions are static (Perrin and McFarland 2011; Wilson and Hodges 1992; Zaller 1992). Where rapport was low, particularly early in the interviews, I employed lower-stakes probes, such as asking for additional details, definitions of terms, and examples.

Qualitative researchers who wish to study race through interview studies must choose whether to ask open-ended questions to which respondents will hopefully, but not certainly, respond in raced ways, or to inform participants that the interview will discuss race and risk priming participants to respond with socially acceptable answers. Recruiting specifically for White people who have reported anti-White discrimination places this study in the latter category. Respondents were primed to think about race through recruitment language describing the study's focus on "politics and discrimination" and through the consent process, which explained that the study was of "White people who have identified racial discrimination." Interviewees reacted to this priming in a variety of ways (e.g., eager to discuss anti-White discrimination, initially reticent, etc.) but were largely candid and increasingly so as rapport developed over the course of each interview.

As a White woman, I was able to take advantage of an "insider" perspective on Whiteness, because White people are more likely to discuss race with a White researcher as opposed to a scholar of color (McDermott 2010; Sleeter 1994). While shared Whiteness intersects with a range of other identities and so is not a guarantee of interviewer-interviewee rapport (Gallagher 2000), my study benefitted from these older White Southerners' willingness to interview with me, a younger White woman born in the South, if not to a Southern family.

Indeed, multiple respondents told me directly that they liked me as a person and/or enjoyed our conversation, even sometimes insinuating that this affinity lay along racial lines.

Given the multiple decades' age difference between my respondents and me, I did my best to establish a respectful, professional demeanor, wearing business casual attire and carrying unobtrusive tote bags rather than a bulky backpack (Arksey and Knight 1999). Despite my best efforts, these gestures seemed to amuse some participants, although I would then simply play up my relative youth to get more information. Most in-person and some phone interviews began with small talk to build rapport and set interviewees at ease. When this was not possible due to phone limitations or respondents' requests for efficiency, and even where it was possible, I worked to build rapport in warm responses to participants' answers, active listening techniques, and brief anecdotes about myself where appropriate. With some respondents, humor was especially effective in building a connection. Interviews concluded with an opportunity for respondents to share anything we had not covered; a post-interview questionnaire to capture age, education, occupation, income, religion, political affiliation, and gender; and my thanks for their time and insights. Fourteen interviews were conducted in person and 11 by phone. Of the in-person interviews, six occurred in a library study room, five in a fast food restaurant, and three at the respondent's home. Interviews ran anywhere from 15 minutes to over three hours, with the majority lasting between one and two hours.

*Analytic Strategy*

I recorded data in three ways: audiotaped, interview debrief notes, and a project journal. I audiotaped each interview on my iPad, except in two instances when the respondents did not consent to recording. In these two cases, detailed notes typed during one phone interview and notes recorded immediately after one in-person interview replaced the audiotape, both with

indications whether the text was verbatim or paraphrased. Recorded interviews were transcribed using Temi robotic translation, and I then edited them for accuracy. Following my informed consent procedure and given interviewees' advanced age, I invited them to call me after the interview with any questions or in case they remembered any information they wanted to add to the record. Two respondents did so, one describing her racially segregated childhood and the other recounting additional experiences of workplace anti-White discrimination. I hand wrote then typed one exchange and typed up the other exchange as it occurred. These two documents became supplementary transcripts, again with notes for verbatim and paraphrased text. Immediately following each interview, I took interview debrief notes via recording or typing to document the participant's appearance and affect, my well-being and state of mind, the interview location if applicable, and other relevant observations. I transcribed the recorded debrief notes by hand so that I could evaluate the relevance of my exhaustion-fueled and sometimes repetitive post-interview observations. Lastly, I used a 50-page project journal to track methodological changes; conversations about the project with colleagues and friends; and my own emotions, questions, concerns, and insights as they emerged during data collection and analysis.

Drawing on both deductive and inductive methods, I employed a narrative frame approach to analyze respondents' stories and framing in these documents with ATLAS software. Throughout analysis, I focused primarily on the interview transcripts and supplementary transcripts. Analysis began in editing the transcripts for accuracy, which gave me an opportunity to read through the data and evaluate my initial memories and assumptions about each interview. I also read through and built out potential themes from my project journal with the memoing tool in ATLAS. Using the 21 transcripts from respondents drawn from the 2018 political opinion survey, I then moved into open coding (Corbin and Strauss 1990). A few codes during this early

phase were influenced by the literature, such as racial geography (Frankenberg 1993) and humor (Bonilla-Silva 2019), but the open coding work was primarily inductive and focused on the ways in which interviewees told their stories. As I progressed, I saw that even participants presenting the most overtly racist views were deeply concerned with their self-presentation (Goffman 1990). Codes like "I'm a good person," "I'm not unreasonable," and "I'm not racist" appeared repeatedly in the data, and it became clear that these codes represented my respondents' work to demonstrate their moral goodness (Kleinman and Kolb 2011). Following this pattern, I identified narrative frames, defensive moral tropes, and marginalized privilege through selective coding (Corbin and Strauss 1990). I then evaluated this analytic framework against the two social network and two snowball interviewees.

One of my goals for this project was to pursue data collection, transcription, and analysis simultaneously wherever possible. Once the project was underway, however, these three processes occurred more in discrete stages due to time constraints. With that limitation, the project journal became a crucial space to track the project's progress and my analytic insights, allowing for some iteration between data collection and analysis.

## FINDINGS

### *Anti-White Discrimination Accounts*

Most participants' anti-White discrimination stories were consistent with prior literature. Several White male respondents, like Jacob, a data scientist, reported violence from Black boys during their school years (Bucholtz 2011). When asked about situations where being White is a disadvantage, Jacob replied:

> I'll give you a story from my past. When I was in public junior high, I was walking down the hall and a Black kid picked me up and pinned me up against the wall, and I was up so high, I'd never been up this high before. I could see my teacher all the way down at the other end of the hall. . .

Others described workplace concerns including promotions (Pincus 2003) and exclusionary or objectionable affirmative action policies (Cabrera 2014; Feagin and O'Brien 2003), such as when Myron, a White male business owner explained, "At this point in my life, I think that it's wrong for the federal government to say that you've got to give 10% of this work to disadvantaged businesses." Some interviewees, like Geoff, a White male engineer, objected to immigrants from Central and South America (Abascal 2015; Lacayo 2017; Taylor, Krysan, and Hall 2017). When asked about personal experiences with discrimination, he replied, "Well, my favorite one is [when he was told], 'Yeah, I could hire three Mexicans for what I'd have to pay for you.' That certainly is discrimination." Lastly, participants described localized situations where one or more people of color held more power than the White person did (Camara and Orbe 2011), such as when Eileen, a White female retired blue-collar worker, described the following experience as being due to her race: "One of the times I had a Black boss, and there

were a lot of changes in our department, he had called most everybody *into his office* to share with them where they would be going, *except me* . . .” (original emphasis). Overall, many previous anti-White discrimination findings persisted in the interviews.

Several interviewees also reported being called racist as an example of anti-White discrimination. When asked if he had ever experienced unfair treatment or discrimination, Mason, a White male business owner, replied,

> I had been accused on a couple of occasions of making a decision based on the other person’s, simply the color of their skin or their nationality, and it’s just an easy thing to throw out now. And it could be devastating because, you know, again, as soon as somebody tries to attach that *word* [racist] to you, you’re kinda like almost automatically guilty. (original emphasis)

Upon further questioning, Mason confirmed that by “that word” he meant “racist.” Mason then identified several different instances where Black people called him racist, mainly in workplace conflicts over regulations and tardiness. Similarly, Ava, a White female retired nurse, described the outcome after reprimanding a Black nursing technician for an error:

> . . . And what was her response? And I think I said what I needed to say very diplomatically. I wasn’t ugly. I wasn’t rude but described the facts of the case and informed her that that was dangerous and that I was prepared to give the insulin. And she said, you wouldn’t be talking to me like that if I weren’t Black. (paraphrase)

When asked if her experiences of workplace conflicts with Black people were discriminatory, Ava answered, “I guess it is in a way, because their mind is fixed [that] because you have White skin, then you’re going to have this [negative] attitude [about Black people].” By identifying charges of racism as discriminatory or crazy, these respondents denied the credibility of their accusers and of the accusations.

Some respondents did not explicitly describe charges of racism as discriminatory but still objected to these accusations. Charles, a White male retired manager, explained,

> . . . And let’s not say anything bad about him [Obama] ‘cause then we’ll be called a racist. It’s crazy. Google right now. If you Google “patriot,” one of their synonyms for

> patriot is bigot, racist. That's one of their synonyms for patriot now. What kind of crazy world is that?

Here, Charles contrasts his positive view of patriotism with the negative attributes of bigotry and racism, defending his sense of self from perceived charges of bigotry and racism. As we will see, respondents used particular narrative frames and defensive moral tropes to maintain their morality while reporting anti-White discrimination.

*Anti-White Discrimination Narrative Frames*

The 19 respondents who reported anti-White discrimination during the interview told stories that fell into two distinct categories: ten characterized by a "get over it" narrative frame and nine characterized by a "victimhood" narrative frame. Sally, a White female retired social worker, exemplified the "get over it" narrative frame when she recounted being told that the federal college loan she had been receiving was withdrawn because "I was not the right color." When asked how she reacted to this news, she answered,

> This sucks! I mean, I felt that I needed the money as much as anyone else. I was trying to improve myself and again, like I said, I was single, I was working, I was going to school and raising a child. Now, I guess they thought I didn't need it, and then ultimately, I didn't need it because *I got through without it . . . It's over and done. I got through it.* (emphasis added)

Even though Sally was distressed by the news at the time, in retelling the story, she gave more weight to her ability to complete her college degree without continued federal financial assistance. Similarly, when asked about unfair treatment of White people generally, Geoff put it this way, "I don't dwell on things that I think are unfair. Ultimately, I figure that I'm responsible for the outcomes of whether I positively or negatively influenced [my life]." While the respondents using the "get over it" narrative frame may have been disappointed or upset by their experiences of anti-White discrimination, they emphasized their ability to cope with the situation and move on from the discrimination. Their stories implied, and sometimes explicitly stated, that

discrimination is something that members of all racial groups experience because life is not fair. Additionally, they were more likely to claim that White people experience the *same* discrimination as other racial groups, both in the political opinion telephone survey and the interview.

Another group of participants told stories using a "victimhood" narrative frame (see also Camara and Orbe 2011; Gest 2016). For example, Ava, who reported being called racist as discriminatory, worked for several years as a nurse in a predominantly Black workplace. When Ava called me later to add some additional information to the record, she expressed surprise that I was interested in anti-White discrimination and described her African supervisor's treatment as "harassment" and how Black nursing technicians "would literally refuse to do what I asked them to do." In recounting these experiences, she said, "It was very traumatic," and suggested that she had blocked it out, explaining, When you asked me in the interview about any discrimination that I had experienced, I had no memory of it (paraphrase). For Ava, workplace anti-White discrimination was so upsetting that she described it as trauma. In another case, Mason emphatically described the extra work and expense that an EEOC complaint against his company had required: "You were *guilty* until you proved yourself innocent. That's *offensive* to me. And it's unfair. It's unjust" (original emphasis). In these accounts, interviewees centered their distress and pain, drawing validity from the events' emotional consequences. This group of participants were more likely to report that White people experience *more* discrimination than other racial groups, in both the political opinion telephone survey and the interview, although some respondents in this group reported the same amount of discrimination as other racial groups. I found no difference in whether interviewees reported discrimination firsthand or against White

people as a group. Men were more likely than women to use the "get over it" narrative frame, while women were more likely than men to use the "victimhood" narrative frame.

*Bad Actor Racism*

It turns out that interviewing White people about anti-White discrimination raises the specter of bad actor racism, or "simple, isolated, and extreme acts of prejudice" (DiAngelo 2018:71). Most, if not all, respondents seemed averse to being perceived as racist, which came through when talking about race and anti-White discrimination during our conversations. Some participants voiced this concern directly. When I asked Craig, a White male farmer and retired business owner, about which groups he described as "ready to protest . . . at the drop of a hat," he replied, "You know, I don't wanna, the minute you start talking about problems, it may sound like you've become racist in a way . . ." Ava raised a similar concern about political and academic discourse, explaining, "I resent being called a hater and that . . . I hate black people. I don't like that, but that's how anyone who says they're a nationalist or a race realist, then we're automatically called haters." Both Craig and Ava gave responses that were specific to my interview questions but that also transcended the interview setting to other realms of their lives—everyday conversations, U.S. politics, and higher education. As other studies have found, White people often respond negatively to conversations about race and racism, because they confuse structural racism with individual-level racism and so fear the moral threat of being called a racist (DiAngelo 2018). The respondents in this study were no different, and when asked about anti-White discrimination, they turned to six defensive moral tropes.

*Defensive Moral Tropes*

To distance themselves from bad actor racism, all but one of the participants drew on what I refer to as defensive moral tropes, or the rhetorical strategies they used to guard their

sense of themselves as good people against the threat of being perceived as racist. These defensive moral tropes include (1) minoritized friends, (2) White paternalism, (3) I'm not like those racist people, (4) racial utopias, (5) the geography of racism, and (6) I was raised not to discriminate. The most common defensive moral trope, used by all but three respondents, is the appeal to "minoritized friends," often the Black best friend (Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2002; Jackman and Crane 1986). Gregory, a White male retired public administrator, described a friendship with a Black coworker:

> I said to him, you know, Shawn, you've never been a White person in a room filled with White people. You have to hear what people say. He goes, Greg, you have never been a Black person in a Black room! But that's the relationship that I had with him. You know, we could talk, and I've never experienced not being able to use a bathroom because I was Black. He did, which I think is one of the stupidest things I've ever seen in my life.

Here, Gregory recounts his friendship with Shawn, emphasizing their "insider" connection and how he opposes racial segregation as "stupid." In addition to the classic "Black best friend," respondents described Hispanic friends, Asian friends, gay friends, and immigrant friends of color, reflecting the increasingly diverse world they inhabit and emphasizing their acceptance of others. When asked about anti-White discrimination in hiring, Sally replied,

> They may feel pressured again to get the diversity . . . and again, one of my absolute best friends is gay. So, it's not about that. But we need so many gay people in here. We need so many Black people in here. We need so many women in here . . . I want the best person available in any position period. And if they happen to be a Black gay woman, wonderful, let's put her in there, . . . but let's don't put her in there because she's a Black gay woman.

Even Marlene, a White female homemaker who commandeered the interview with her personal stories and answered none of my questions, described her Black mechanic as a friend. In addition to their own friends and close coworkers, some participants described their, their children's, or their grandchildren's open-mindedness in befriending, dating, and marrying minoritized group members. This defensive moral trope is characterized by a wholly positive relationship with a

minoritized person, detailed information about the relationship, and, importantly, the White speaker's moral goodness. These detailed appeals to minoritized friends reveal the need to demonstrate moral goodness under the moral threat of racism, even for these older and more conservative White Southerners.

Similar to but distinct from minoritized friends is "White paternalism," where respondents demonstrated White people's care for the minoritized people, usually Black and Hispanic people, who worked for them. This was the second most common defensive moral trope, used by two-thirds of the interviewees and more by Republicans and Independents than Democrats. Beatrice, a White female retired public administrator, recalled a farm near her childhood home where she sometimes stayed after school:

> The farm had hands that worked for them . . . They had some little houses that they kept a [Black] man who had some mental problems, but they kept him a place to stay. So, I had him to interact with . . . And he worked there and they looked after him, fed him, and everything. So, I think that's where some of the things now that I like to volunteer in and do volunteer work, I think some of that came back from seeing them help people.

Also falling into this category are instances when participants described minoritized group members as being foolishly misled, often including an implied or spoken "I, as the White person, know better" statement. They then demonstrated their own moral goodness by trying to show that person the error of their ways. Geoff employed this White paternalism as he recounted explaining to his Black assistant that their White bosses' paternalism would eventually backfire:

> They would do something like, okay, we don't have any work for you to do today, but you can go over to my house and cut the grass. And I would just look at them and say, hell no, you ain't got no work for me, then I'm gonna go home and cut my own damn grass . . . [He] would look at me, and he said, well, why did you tell him that? They're going to pay you anyway. I looked at him and I said, let me tell you something . . . And I said, at some point down the road, they're gonna call in that favor from you. You know, you're gonna ask them for a raise or something like that and they're gonna look at you and say, remember all those times that you know, we let you cut grass or whatever, but we still paid you anyway. I said, you're gonna pay for this. It's gonna cost you a whole lot more than it is to lose a couple hours of pay . . . and that kind of went right over his head.

White paternalism demonstrates the White speaker's generosity and/or wisdom shared with a minoritized person, centering the White person as the moral hero of the racial story.

The third most common defensive moral trope, used by a little over half of interviewees and more by Democrats and Independents than Republicans, is "I'm not like those racist people." Beatrice has a grandson with a Hispanic girlfriend, and she described the discrimination they face: "You would not believe when he and she go somewhere how people will make remarks to her . . . about you don't belong here . . . and that's not right. That's not fair." In Beatrice's story, racist people are unnamed strangers who are publicly rude to a Hispanic person. Carl, a White male blue-collar worker, was even less specific about who these racist people are, stating, "*Some people* are more prejudiced than I am. I understand that. There are people out there like that, and there probably always will be, I guess" (emphasis added). These participants pointed to racist people who are distant from them to demonstrate that they know what racism is and how it is not a part of who they are. While some interviewees characterized close family members as racist (see also Bonilla-Silva et al. 2004:568), they more often described a racist acquaintance or even racist strangers rather than a close relative. Respondents who did disclose a racist family member would typically discuss one or more of these vague racists elsewhere in the interview. Again, under the moral threat of being labeled a racist, White respondents put as much figurative distance between themselves and that label as possible.

The next most common defensive moral trope was "racial utopias," appearing when respondents described a specific place and/or time in history when race relations were purely or almost purely harmonious. A little over a third of the interviewees used this defensive moral trope, and all but one of the participants who described these racial utopias were born in the South. When asked whether there were tensions around school integration in his hometown,

Jared, a White male retired public administrator responded, “No, no, not really. Not really. Not in our, our small town was very, very accepting of everybody.” Erica, a White female retired teacher, went further to describe an owner-slave relationship in a positive light, combining White paternalism with a racial utopia:

> I had an aunt when I was about 14 years old. She had a slave. They built him a house, him and his wife, and they lived on her property, and they paid him and his wife to help them on the farm. Well, his wife died, and they told him if he wanted to go, he was free to go. He was not a slave anymore, and he didn’t want to go, and he stayed there till he died. So, he was satisfied, and it wasn’t that she was using them. She’d just given him a place to stay and a house to live in, but they called him a slave. And to me, that was not a slave.

These nostalgic accounts appeared intended to counteract well-documented accounts of vicious exploitation of Black people, both enslaved and free, as interviewees worked to demonstrate that they did not live in a racist environment. While racial structures vary throughout the United States by time and place (Parham 2017), this defensive moral trope is always characterized by an erasure of the power dynamics of race.

Six participants validated their moral selves with the “geography of racism” based on their region of birth. Lisa, a White female retired teacher born on the West Coast, explained,

> Let’s put it this way. In California, there were so many ethnic groups. I mean people from Turkey, Iran, India, people still wearing the Indian costumes from India, and you’re more open-minded, you know, you’re more accepting. But the South isn’t like that.

Here, Lisa contrasts the South with “open-minded” California to situate racism as a uniquely Southern phenomenon and thus not a part of her identity. Ava, a native Southerner, argued the opposite, stating,

> The whole world has been involved in slavery, and still is, many countries . . . I really get upset because we’re always talking about the Southerners, the South, and slavery. And we’ve taken the blame for the entire world over slavery.

Sally, who also grew up in the South, made a similar case: “I don’t think the South is any more prejudiced than any other parts of the country.” Mason, who was born in the Midwest and raised

on the West Coast, located overt racism in the South by comparing it to similar offenses he heard committed against people from India and Japan on the West Coast.[1] He was the only interviewee in this group who did not distance himself from overt racism in this way. Overall, though, this subgroup's participants born outside of the South deployed the geography of racism to locate racist behaviors as occurring solely in the South, while participants born in the South argued that racism extends beyond the South to other parts of the United States and even other parts of the world. These interviewees either challenged or upheld the perception that White people born in the South are more racist than other White Americans to bolster their respective moral cases.

Finally, five Southern-born respondents over the age of 70 used the defensive moral trope "I was raised not to discriminate." Participants would sometimes make this claim when discussing their hometowns or childhoods. For example, after describing public school integration in her hometown, Lori, a White female retired administrative assistant, reassured me,

> I never really had any relationships with any Black people. But we weren't brought up to hate anybody. We had good parents. They were better than a lot of 'em. We weren't taught to hate people because of their color or anything.

This trope also occurred in conversations about discrimination, as when I asked Craig to say more about what he had called "majority vs. minority" discrimination: "Well, I believe that discrimination can come in a lot of ways. I was raised not discriminating at all. The only thing we discriminated against was right against wrong." Distinct from racial utopias, which challenge the perception of Southern social structures as racist, here participants worked to discount the perception of their parents and families as racist people. Even though I certainly never asked any interviewees whether they were raised in a discriminatory way, this subgroup appeared to expect

[1] Immediately thereafter, he pivoted to describing his racially egalitarian business dealings, demonstrating his moral goodness in a different arena.

that I held that assumption about them as White Southerners and responded to this threat to their morality by distancing themselves from the bad actor racist.

Twenty-four of the 25 interviewees used at least one defensive moral trope, and the single exception case, Ronald, still demonstrated his morality. Ronald, a retired White man, gave a 15-minute phone interview due to his advanced age and poor health. Even so, early in the interview, he described himself as a veteran of World War II and as a patriot: "I love my country . . . It means everything to me." He later characterized his life choices as shaped by traditional norms and values, explaining, "I did what was expected of me." It is possible that Ronald would have used defensive moral tropes under different interview conditions, and even in the short amount of time that we spoke, he emphasized his moral goodness.

These six defensive moral tropes—(1) minoritized friends, (2) White paternalism, (3) I'm not like those racist people, (4) racial utopias, (5) the geography of racism, and (6) I was raised not to discriminate—are the tactics that these White Southerners used to guard their sense of themselves as good people who understood racism as wrong. Nearly every respondent used at least one defensive moral trope, and the only participant who did not do so gave the shortest interview under less than ideal circumstances. Focusing on White respondents as racialized actors rather than on their attitudes toward minoritized groups (Lewis 2004) provides insight into how these White Southerners talk about themselves as morally good people while also reporting anti-White discrimination in many cases. Defensive moral tropes arose in response to fears of being associated with bad actor racism (DiAngelo 2018) to deliver a moral response to this moral threat.

*Marginalized Privilege*

Taking these anti-White discrimination narrative frames and defensive moral tropes together, we see how this group of older White Southerners was particularly concerned with two things when interviewed about anti-White discrimination. First, many, although not all, maintained that discrimination does occur against White Americans, reporting that White people experience the same amount as or more discrimination than other racial groups and telling their stories through a "get over it" or a "victimhood" narrative frame. Second, they demonstrated how they are not racist by using one or more defensive moral tropes. Through these two strategies, these White respondents enacted "marginalized privilege," which I define as when members of a privileged group claim for themselves what they perceive to be the benefits of minoritized group membership. Charles explained the perceived benefit of reporting discrimination:

> . . . You've got a crutch to fall back on. If you're not White male, you always have a crutch. If you don't get something, if you don't get a promotion, if you don't get a pay raise, you've got that crutch, well, it's 'cause I'm Black . . . I was Indian, I was a woman. They gave it to a guy, you know, the old boys' club, the glass ceiling, all that mess.

Here, Charles describes the ability to report racial discrimination as a "crutch" available to everyone other than White men, undermining minoritized groups' claims to discrimination while coopting racial discrimination through anti-White discrimination reports. In reporting anti-White discrimination while centering their moral goodness, these older White Southerners distanced themselves from the racial bad actor while frequently denying the existence of the U.S. racial hierarchy, thus maintaining perceptions of White superiority.

*Anti-White Discrimination Deniers*

Six respondents—all but one of whom reported no firsthand discrimination and the same amount of racial discrimination as other racial groups on the political opinion telephone survey and all but one of whom were over the age of 70—denied that anti-White discrimination occurs

in the United States today. Some appeared not to understand what I meant by discrimination against White people. When asked if White people are ever treated unfairly, Ronald replied,

> I have no sense of picturing that, even. I never ran into any circumstances. We all have run into certain circumstances that we maybe perhaps were not exactly happy with but not very often. I have no complaints about my life. If the person was reasonable, I got along with them.

Perhaps participants like Ronald considered their own Whiteness so rarely that the questions appeared alien to them. If that is the case, their political opinion telephone survey answers may have been default responses without much thought behind them. Another possibility, though, is that Ronald belongs in the "get over it" narrative frame of anti-White discrimination reporters, given his comment about everyone running into "certain circumstances" throughout life.

When asked about anti-White discrimination, other interviewees in this group answered briefly and then turned the conversation away from themselves to talk about other, more problematic White people or about people of color, usually Black people. After firmly stating that he had experienced no anti-White discrimination, Paul, a retired business owner and law enforcement officer, recounted instances of police brutality and misconduct:

> There were several Black people back in the early '50s. They would be arrested on, just, occasions. One of 'em wasn't such an honorable person, but the things that he did were petty thefts. And they would take him and beat him and beat him and beat him, and in the courthouses. And he eventually got sent off to prison, and I'm talking probably 1970. And as far as I've heard, he's still in prison on just little charges, little petty thefts.

Similarly, Jane, a retired public administrator, turned to describing Black people's contemporary concerns about law enforcement. This pattern may indicate an interviewer-interviewee miscommunication; however, respondents also may have had some degree of discomfort with the line of questioning, limited fluency in talking about their own Whiteness, more familiarity with debates about policing Black communities, or some combination of these factors.

In at least one case, social desirability bias may have influenced the participant's answer. Lori, a Democrat and the only respondent in this subset who reported that White people experience more discrimination than other racial groups on the phone survey, insisted on learning my political affiliation in the middle of the interview. I initially tried to redirect her focus but sensed that she might end the interview if I did not answer her question and acknowledged my Democratic party membership. Later in our conversation, she denied that anti-White discrimination exists and stated about anti-White discrimination reporters that "Either they've been brought up to hate people that are different or they're just too ignorant to accept that everybody's different." Another case, Jared, the only member of this group under the age of 70, consistently reported race-cognizant views (Frankenberg 1993) under extensive probing, to the point that I believed him when he said he thought he "may have marked something wrong" on the phone survey. Even he, though, employed two different defensive moral tropes during our conversation, suggesting that White people who are aware of racial hierarchies also use defensive moral tropes. Overall, interviewees in this group may have avoided discussing anti-White discrimination due to the effects of older age on memory and/or appropriate conversation topics, a lack of context for the conversation, a lack of comfort with the topic, social desirability bias, reporting error, and/or the contextual nature of opinions (Perrin and McFarland 2011; Wilson and Hodges 1992; Zaller 1992).

## DISCUSSION

This paper is the first to demonstrate the moral dimensions of anti-White discrimination reports, but it is by no means the first work examining the relationships between race and morality. W.E.B. Du Bois (1920) identifies the moral bankruptcy and hypocrisy of White people and White supremacy, placing U.S. and Western racisms in their international contexts. Robert Berkhofer (1978) shows how the term "Indian," used to describe indigenous peoples, includes not only descriptions of customs but also of inherent morality. Charles Mills (1997) argues that the political, *moral*, and epistemological racial contract creates a world order rendering White people blind to the very systems from which they benefit. Michèle Lamont (2000) documents how U.S. Black and White working-class men draw racial and class boundaries along moral lines, as well as how White working-class men draw brighter moral boundaries than their Black counterparts. Lawrence Blum (2002) draws moral distinctions within race and racism and identifies the moral threat of being called racist; however, his conclusions elide structural racism. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, in contrast, identifies how racial ideology "helps normalize racial inequality by portraying the particularistic interests of the dominant race as universal and by instilling social and *moral* authority over all social actors" (2003:77–78, emphasis added). Dorothy Roberts (2011) also draws on moral distinctions between racial groups as a central component of her race theory. Nicole Gonzalez Van Cleve (2016) documents how legal professionals in Chicago determine predominantly Black and Brown defendants' worthiness of legal defense on moral grounds. Robin DiAngelo (2018) argues that White fragility protects

White people's sense of themselves as morally good people while maintaining racial inequality. From these works, we see that differential access to morality is a foundational component of the U.S. racial system.

Joining this conversation on race and morality are anti-White discrimination narrative frames, defensive moral tropes, and marginalized privilege. When interviewed about anti-White discrimination, participants told stories with moral subtexts that affirmed the validity of anti-White discrimination while often discounting discrimination against people of color and other minoritized groups. Using the "get over it" narrative frame implied that members of minoritized groups should be like these interviewees and get over discrimination. In so doing, interviewees passed moral judgment on minoritized people who protest racial discrimination. Respondents using the "victimhood" narrative frame emphasized their own emotions and innocence to make the moral case that the offending party was guilty of discrimination. Additionally, these White Southerners used a series of defensive moral tropes to maintain their sense of themselves as good people even while reporting problematic views on race (e.g., race as determinative, cultural racism, etc.). These rhetorical strategies created the conceptual space for morally good interviewees to share their views of the world without having to confront conditions of White privilege. They were then able to lay claim to the perceived benefits of members of minoritized groups—in this case, reporting racial discrimination—through marginalized privilege. Access to marginalized privilege enabled respondents to challenge the validity of structural racism and perpetuate White supremacy without ever having to acknowledge its role in their own and other people's lives.

While all 25 White Southerners affirmed their own morality in the interviews, a few interesting trends emerged by respondents' gender and political affiliation. When discussing anti-

White discrimination, men were more likely to use the "get over it" narrative frame and women were more likely to use the "victimhood" narrative frame. This difference reflects persistent gender status beliefs about appropriate behavior for men and women (Ridgeway 2011; West and Zimmerman 1987), where men are expected to express a limited range of emotions (Connell 2005) and women are expected to employ victimhood language (Heru 2001) and rely on men for support. Additionally, more Republicans and Independents used "White paternalism" than Democrats, while more Democrats and Independents used "I'm not like those racist people" than Republicans. Variation by political affiliation within defensive moral tropes makes sense given the documented relationships between politics and anti-White discrimination reports (Blendon et al. 2017; Mayrl and Saperstein 2013), and this particular variation likely reflects differences in what right-leaning and left-leaning White Americans consider acceptable race talk.

Finally, prior work has demonstrated that White people use testimonies, or (1) disclosing knowledge of a close person who is racist and (2) positive or negative interactions with Black people, to save face while reinforcing colorblind racial ideology (Bonilla-Silva et al. 2004). Given my findings from anti-White discrimination reporters, we should consider how these testimonies may be defending respondents' morality. If so, these testimonies may in fact be examples of defensive moral tropes.

*Limitations*

One limitation of this study is the possibility of interviewer effects, if respondents are more likely to use defensive moral tropes with an interviewer whom they perceive to be liberal. Some participants made assumptions about my political opinions, like Charles, who expressed relief that Hillary Clinton did not win the 2016 U.S. presidential election and then said to me, "Well, and you probably voted for her. I'll bet you 20 bucks you voted for her." While I can say

with certainty that all but one of my respondents used defensive moral tropes in their conversations with me, I cannot evaluate whether they employ these rhetorical strategies in other settings. Based on the ease with which they often spoke, I am inclined to think that they do at least some of the time. Determining the exact parameters of this framework will require additional research.

It is also possible that some interviewees were not responding to the threat of being labeled racist, but instead were expressing some other concern. While I have documented here how different respondents vocalized this fear, I, like other researchers, cannot know with certainty my participants' motivations.

This group of respondents is also highly educated, with everyone holding at least a high school degree and all but three having at least some college education. Given their educational status, these White Southerners may be more conversant with mainstream expectations of coded rhetoric. Qualitative work frequently must rely on some degree of convenience sampling, so ultimately, I had to operate with the group that agreed to interview with me. Although the group is highly educated overall, it includes multiple less educated, blue-collar workers, who displayed the same types of defensive moral tropes as their white-collar peers. Future research should determine the extent to which other groups of anti-White discrimination reporters use defensive moral tropes. Similarly, this study recruited solely from White adults currently living in the Southern United States, and future studies should investigate other regions.

Four of this study's participants were recruited through snowball sampling and social networks rather than through a prior survey. Any concerns regarding the diversity of recruitment are addressed by the remarkable similarity of all interviewees' accounts.

*Strengths*

To the best of my knowledge, this project is the first interview study to focus solely on White Americans who report anti-White discrimination. The study design primed respondents to think about race and discrimination through recruitment, in obtaining informed consent, and with questions that directly discussed anti-White discrimination. As a result, these White Southerners feared appearing racist (DiAngelo 2018) and responded with particular narrative frames and defensive moral tropes to guard their sense of themselves as good people against this moral threat.

This project is also the first study to recruit and interview White people who reported anti-White discrimination on a prior survey. This part of the study design has two strengths. First, provided participants' answers accurately reflected their experiences, most of the cases cleanly match the recruitment criteria. Second, participants have already reported the discrimination and so can engage in an open-ended interview.

# CONCLUSION

This paper enters a long conversation about how White people operate in a system of U.S. White supremacy (Blumer 1958; Bobo 1999; Bonilla-Silva 2018; DiAngelo 2018; Du Bois 1920; Frankenberg 1993; Harris 1993; Mills 1997), including the narrower conversation around anti-White discrimination (Blendon et al. 2017; Camara and Orbe 2011; Mayrl and Saperstein 2013; Pincus 2003), contributing evidence from 25 older White Southerners who reported anti-White discrimination against themselves or their racial group. This study provides clarity on what some White survey participants mean when they report anti-White discrimination today and documents how some respondents identified accusations of racism against themselves as discriminatory. More importantly, these older White Southerners used a "get over it" narrative frame or a "victimhood" narrative frame to tell their stories and demonstrated how they are not racist through six defensive moral tropes: (1) minoritized friends, (2) White paternalism, (3) I'm not like those racist people, (4) racial utopias, (5) the geography of racism, and (6) I was raised not to discriminate. From the morally good position of "not racist," these respondents could then safely report anti-White discrimination. I argue that these White Americans are working to claim for themselves what they perceive to be the benefits of minoritized group membership—here, the ability to report racial discrimination—a strategy that I call marginalized privilege.

Future research should evaluate the parameters of the two theoretical concepts presented here, defensive moral tropes and marginalized privilege. Studies could explore whether White people who have reported anti-White discrimination but who live in other parts of the United

States also deploy defensive moral tropes and marginalized privilege, and whether their strategies vary according to the different racial landscapes that exist regionally throughout the United States (Parham 2017). Researchers should also investigate whether these themes are present among less educated anti-White discrimination reporters and in White people who do not report anti-White discrimination. Similarly, studies should gauge whether members of other American privileged groups, such as men, cisgender people, heterosexual people, and people who are not living with a disability, deploy these or similar themes, or whether defensive moral tropes and marginalized privilege are unique to the way that race operates in the United States. Additionally, work could investigate privileged groups internationally to learn how these groups may respond in similar or different ways given different national and local contexts. Ideally, these qualitative studies would include a participant observation component to increase researcher-subject rapport and the potential to observe these and other related concepts in action. Complementary experimental work could evaluate the conditions under which subjects resort to defensive moral tropes and marginalized privilege. Future research may also benefit from a narrative frames approach, particularly when a phenomenon is documented but the underlying contexts remain unclear.

Finally, contemporary race scholarship on White people should take seriously the role that morality plays in the ongoing construction and maintenance of Whiteness. Even these White people who reported anti-White discrimination, were majority politically conservative, and were largely conversant around race distanced themselves from bad actor racism. Race theories beyond Whiteness may also benefit from renewed attention to the moral dimensions of different racial categories and the ways in which racialized actors "do" race in line with moral codes.

## APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANTS' PHONE SURVEY RESPONSES OF DISCRIMINATION

| | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **Personal Discrimination** | | |
| A Lot | 1 | 4% |
| Some | 3 | 12% |
| Not Sure or Other | 2 | 8% |
| None | 15 | 60% |
| N/A | 4 | 16% |
| | | |
| **Group Discrimination** | | |
| More Than | 5 | 20% |
| Same As | 16 | 64% |
| N/A | 4 | 16% |

Observations (N)=25

## APPENDIX B: PHONE SURVEY PERSONAL DISCRIMINATION RESPONSES BY SELF-REPORTED CHARACTERISTICS

| | A Lot (N=1) | Some (N=3) | Not Sure or Other (N=2) | None (N=15) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | | | |
| Male | 1 | 2 | 1 | 8 |
| Female | 0 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| | | | | |
| **Age** | | | | |
| 55-59 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 60-69 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 70+ | 0 | 1 | 1 | 13 |
| | | | | |
| **Education** | | | | |
| High School Degree | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Some College | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Associate's Degree | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 0 | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Graduate Degree | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| | | | | |
| **Income** | | | | |
| $30,000-39,000 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| $60,000-69,000 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| $80,000-89,000 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| $100,000+ | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Declined or Unavailable | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 |
| | | | | |
| **Region Born** | | | | |
| South | 1 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| Northeast | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| West | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | | | | |
| **Political Affiliation** | | | | |
| Republican | 0 | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| Democrat | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Independent | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Declined or Unavailable | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Observations (N)=21 | | | | |

*Note:* Social network and snowball participants are omitted. See Tables 4 and 5 for self-reported characteristics for all cases.

## APPENDIX C: PHONE SURVEY GROUP DISCRIMINATION RESPONSES BY SELF-REPORTED CHARACTERISTICS

| | More Than (N=5) | Same As (N=16) |
|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 3 | 9 |
| Female | 2 | 7 |
| | | |
| **Age** | | |
| 55-59 | 1 | 0 |
| 60-69 | 1 | 4 |
| 70+ | 3 | 12 |
| | | |
| **Education** | | |
| High School Degree | 2 | 1 |
| Some College | 0 | 3 |
| Associate's Degree | 1 | 1 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 1 | 8 |
| Graduate Degree | 1 | 3 |
| | | |
| **Income** | | |
| $30,000-39,000 | 1 | 2 |
| $60,000-69,000 | 0 | 5 |
| $80,000-89,000 | 1 | 1 |
| $100,000+ | 1 | 2 |
| Declined or Unavailable | 2 | 6 |
| | | |
| **Region Born** | | |
| South | 4 | 11 |
| Northeast | 0 | 4 |
| West | 1 | 1 |
| | | |
| **Political Affiliation** | | |
| Republican | 3 | 8 |
| Democrat | 1 | 3 |
| Independent | 1 | 5 |
| Declined or Unavailable | 0 | 0 |

Observations (N)=21

*Note:* Social network and snowball participants are omitted. See Tables 4 and 5 for self-reported characteristics for all cases.

## APPENDIX D: SELF-REPORTED CHARACTERISTICS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

| | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **Age** | | |
| 55-59 | 2 | 8% |
| 60-69 | 7 | 28% |
| 70+ | 16 | 64% |
| | | |
| **Education** | | |
| High School Degree | 3 | 12% |
| Some College | 3 | 12% |
| Associate's Degree | 1 | 4% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 10 | 40% |
| Graduate Degree | 8 | 32% |
| | | |
| **Occupational Group (Current or Retired)** | | |
| Architecture and Engineering | 1 | 4% |
| Business and Financial Operations | 3 | 12% |
| Computer and Mathematical | 1 | 4% |
| Construction and Extraction | 2 | 8% |
| Educational Instruction and Library | 2 | 8% |
| Farming, Fishing, and Forestry | 1 | 4% |
| Health Care | 4 | 16% |
| Homemaker | 1 | 4% |
| Management | 7 | 28% |
| Office and Administrative Support | 2 | 8% |
| Sales and Related | 1 | 4% |
| | | |
| **Income** | | |
| $30,000-39,000 | 3 | 12% |
| $60,000-69,000 | 5 | 20% |
| $80,000-89,000 | 2 | 8% |
| $100,000+ | 5 | 20% |
| Declined or Unavailable | 10 | 40% |
| | | |
| **Religious Affiliation** | | |
| Mainstream Protestant | 12 | 48% |
| Evangelical Protestant | 8 | 32% |
| Catholic | 1 | 4% |
| Atheist | 1 | 4% |
| Other | 1 | 4% |
| Declined or Unavailable | 2 | 8% |
| | | |
| **Political Affiliation** | | |
| Republican | 12 | 48% |
| Democrat | 5 | 20% |
| Independent | 7 | 28% |
| Declined or Unavailable | 1 | 4% |
| | | |
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 15 | 60% |
| Female | 10 | 40% |

Observations (N)=25

*Note:* Social network and snowball participants did not vary notably from survey participants.

## APPENDIX E: SELF-REPORTED CHARACTERISTICS FROM THE INTERVIEW

| | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **Region Born** | | |
| South | 18 | 72% |
| Northeast | 5 | 20% |
| West | 2 | 8% |
| | | |
| **Immigrants in Family** | | |
| Mentioned | 6 | 24% |
| Not Mentioned | 19 | 76% |
| | | |
| **Religious Participation** | | |
| Regular, Devout | 9 | 36% |
| Regular | 3 | 12% |
| None but Religious | 4 | 16% |
| None | 2 | 8% |
| Unclear, Guess Some | 7 | 28% |
| | | |
| **Media Habits** | | |
| Mainstream | 3 | 12% |
| Mix of Mainstream and Right-Leaning | 4 | 16% |
| Right-Leaning Only | 12 | 48% |
| Declined or Unavailable | 6 | 24% |

Observations (N)=25

*Note:* Social network and snowball participants did not vary notably from survey participants.

## APPENDIX F: POST-INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How old are you?
    a. 18-29
    b. 30-39
    c. 40-49
    d. 50-59
    e. 60-69
    f. 70+
    g. Prefer not to answer
2. What is the highest level of education you have obtained?
    a. Less than a high school degree
    b. High school degree
    c. Some college
    d. Associate's degree
    e. Bachelor's degree
    f. Graduate degree
    g. Prefer not to answer
3. What is your current job?
    a. [Open ended response]
    b. Prefer not to answer
4. What is your approximate annual household income?
    a. Under $10,000
    b. $10,000-19,000
    c. $20,000-29,000
    d. $30,000-39,000
    e. $40,000-49,000
    f. $50,000-59,000
    g. $60,000-69,000
    h. $70,000-79,000
    i. $80,000-89,000
    j. $90,000-99,000
    k. $100,000+
    l. Prefer not to answer
5. With what religious faith do you identify, if any?
    a. Mainstream Protestant Christianity
    b. Evangelical Protestant Christianity
    c. Catholicism
    d. Orthodox Christianity
    e. Judaism
    f. Islam
    g. Hinduism
    h. Buddhism
    i. Atheism
    j. Other, please specify:
    k. None

l. Prefer not to answer

6. What is your political affiliation?
   a. Democrat
   b. Independent
   c. Republican
   d. Other, please specify:
   e. No political affiliation
   f. Prefer not to answer

7. What is your gender?
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Transgender
   d. Other, please specify:
   e. Prefer not to answer

## APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW GUIDE

**Begin the interview**

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed for my interview project about politics and discrimination. At any point before, during, or after the interview, you may ask questions about this project, and I will answer your questions. Do you have any questions at this time? [Pause for answer]

As a reminder, your participation is completely voluntary, and we can skip any question or questions that you prefer not to answer. You can also end the interview at any time for any reason without penalty.

Your privacy and confidentiality, including anything you say during this interview, will be protected at all times, except where prohibited by law.

There is no "right" or "wrong" answer to any of these questions. This is not a test. The goal is to have a conversation about you and your take on different topics.

Please note that throughout the course of the interview, I may at times challenge or contradict one or more of your answers. I may do so not because I disagree with you personally or professionally, but because this strategy has been found to generate rich data in prior studies.

**Prompting Questions**

1. Can you give me an example?
2. Did/do people in your community think that (or disagree)?
3. I would think [contradicting point]. What would you say to that?
4. Many people think [contradicting point]. How would you respond?
5. Did/do you have similar (or different) experiences at school/work/other?
6. Other respondents have said [contradicting point]. What would you say to that?
7. That sounds like a unique experience. How is it part of a larger pattern?

**Interview Questions**

Background—Home and Family

1. To start off, please tell me about yourself. Where were you born? When was that?
    a. Where did you grow up?
    b. What was it like growing up in your hometown?
    c. What was your community like?
    d. Tell me about your family. Who lived in your house growing up?
    e. What was important to you and your family? What kinds of values did your family hold?
    f. How did you get to the area? [If not born locally]

Background—School

2. Now, I want to hear about school, so kindergarten through twelfth grade. Where did you go to school?
    a. What was school like for you?
    b. Who were your friends?
    c. What was your favorite subject?
    d. Did you have a favorite teacher? Who was it?
    e. What did you want to be when you grew up?
    f. How did your career plan change, if at all, in high school?
    g. What did you do after high school?

3. Now, I would like to ask you about college. Where did you go to college? [if applicable]
    a. What was college like for you?
    b. Who were your friends?
    c. What was your major?
    d. Did you have a favorite professor? Who was it?
    e. How did your career plan change, if at all, in college?
    f. What did you do after college?

Background—Work

4. Now, I want to talk about your job. What do you do for a living now?
    a. How long have you been working in your field?
    b. What are your responsibilities at work? Can you take me through a day at your job? OR if retired: Can you take me through a day in your life?
    c. Do you think your younger self would be surprised at what you do [OR did] for a living?
    d. How do you think your life compares to the people you grew up with?

Background—Politics

5. So, you've been telling me about how you grew up and where you went to school and what you do for a living. Now, I'd like to ask you about politics. What would you say are the two or three most important political issues facing our country today?
    a. Why these issues?
    b. When you think about political issues, where do you go for your news? Who do you trust?
    c. What concerns you about the state of our country?

Salient Unfair Treatment and/or Political Issue

6. When would you say that you started being concerned about this issue?
7. What concerns you the most about this issue?
8. Does [issue] ever scare or worry you?
9. How did that make you feel?
10. When I say discrimination, what does that mean to you?

Survey Questions for Prompting

11. How much discrimination have you personally experienced because of your race or ethnicity, a lot, some, or none at all?
    a. What about microaggressions, or minor offensive encounters that seem to be about race?
12. Overall, do you believe people of your racial or ethnic group suffer more or less discrimination than people in other groups, or about the same?
    a. What about microaggressions, or minor offensive encounters that seem to be about race?
    b. What groups are similar? Is that the same type of discrimination?

Unfair Treatment—Specific Group

13. Continuing in the vein of talking about politics, I'd like to ask you about some controversial political topics, if that's okay, and I'd like to hear what you think about them.
    a. Researchers know a fair amount about discrimination against racial minorities but less about discrimination against white people. What can you tell us about that?
    b. Some people say that because of past discrimination, minorities should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of minorities is wrong because it discriminates against whites. What do you think about that?
    c. Some people say that because of past discrimination, minorities should be given preference in higher education and for scholarships. Others say that such preference in higher education and scholarships for minorities is wrong because it discriminates against whites. What do you think about that?
    d. Current research is suggesting that white people are going to become a minority group by 2045. What do you think about that?

e. Some people say that policing is discriminatory against minorities, while other people say that policing is justified due to crime rates. What do you think about that?
f. Some people say that Irish, Italians, and Jewish people overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Minorities should do the same without special favors. What do you think about that?
g. Some people think that welfare policies are necessary to help lift people out of poverty, while other people say that these policies are unfair to white people and others who are doing well financially. What do you think about that?
h. Some people think that mainstream media coverage is largely fair and unbiased, while other people think that it portrays minorities unfairly, and still other people think that it portrays white people unfairly. What do you think about that?
i. Which groups would you say have been discriminated against historically? What about now? How has discrimination changed in the course of your lifetime?

Unfair Treatment—Specific Individual

14. Thinking through these different political issues and types discrimination, have you ever been treated unfairly due to your race?
    a. Tell me about what happened.
        i. If you did not have to prove it to anyone, what would you say?
        ii. Who (or what) treated you unfairly?
        iii. Tell me about the moment you realized it was about race.
        iv. What other times have you been treated unfairly because you are white?
    b. Who else do you know who has been treated unfairly because they are white?
        i. Tell me about what happened.
        ii. Who (or what) treated them unfairly?
        iii. Tell me about the moment they realized it was about race.
    c. [Repeat part b if needed.]
    d. Have you ever avoided doing something or going somewhere because you were afraid that you would be treated differently or unfairly?
    e. Have you ever lost money due to unfair treatment?

Wrap-Up Questions

15. Thank you so much for answering these questions. I have a few more questions before we wrap up. Is there anything that you want to add to what we have discussed?
    a. Is there anything that you thought I would ask but did not ask?

**Conclude the Interview**

Thank you for interviewing with me. I truly appreciate your time. I now have a brief, two-page questionnaire that I will ask you to complete. Again, all questions are voluntary. [Pause to complete questionnaire] Thank you for completing the questionnaire, and thank you again for

taking the time to do this interview. It has been very insightful to meet with you and get to hear your views! [Give gift card, turn off recording]

## REFERENCES


Abascal, Maria. 2015. "Us and Them: Black-White Relations in the Wake of Hispanic Population Growth." *American Sociological Review* 80(4):789–813.

Arksey, Hilary, and Peter T. Knight. 1999. *Interviewing for Social Scientists: An Introductory Resource with Examples*. London: SAGE.

Berkhofer, Robert F. 1978. *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*. Knopf : distributed by Random House.

Bertaux, Daniel. 1981. *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences*. Sage Publications.

Blendon, Robert J., Logan S. Casey, John M. Benson, Justin M. Sayde, Caitlin L. McMurty, and Tiffany Chan. 2017. *Discrimination in America: Experiences and Views*. Boston, MA: Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health.

Blum, Lawrence. 2002. *"I'm Not a Racist, But...": The Moral Quandary of Race*. Cornell University Press.

Blumer, Herbert. 1958. "Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position." *Pacific Sociological Review* 1(1):3–7.

Bobo, Lawrence D. 1999. "Prejudice as Group Position: Microfoundations of a Sociological Approach to Racism and Race Relations." *Journal of Social Issues* 55(3):445–72.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 1997. "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation." *American Sociological Review* 62(3):465–80.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2001. *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2002. "The Linguistics of Color Blind Racism: How to Talk Nasty about Blacks without Sounding 'Racist.'" *Critical Sociology* 28(1–2):41–64.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2003. "Racial Attitudes or Racial Ideology? An Alternative Paradigm for Examining Actors' Racial Views." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 8(1):63–82.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2018. *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*. Fifth edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2019. "Feeling Race: Theorizing the Racial Economy of Emotions." *American Sociological Review* 84(1):1–25.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo, Amanda Lewis, and David G. Embrick. 2004. "'I Did Not Get That Job Because of a Black Man...': The Story Lines and Testimonies of Color-Blind Racism." *Sociological Forum* 19(4):555–81.

Bucholtz, Mary. 2011. "'It's Different for Guys': Gendered Narratives of Racial Conflict among White California Youth." *Discourse & Society* 22(4):385–402.

Cabrera, Nolan. 2014. "Exposing Whiteness in Higher Education: White Male College Students Minimizing Racism, Claiming Victimization, and Recreating White Supremacy." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 17(1):30–55.

Camara, Sakile K., and Mark P. Orbe. 2011. "Understanding Interpersonal Manifestations of 'Reverse Discrimination' Through Phenomenological Inquiry." *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 40(2):111–34.

Connell, R. W. 2005. *Masculinities*. Polity.

Cook, Thomas D., and Brian R. Flay. 1978. "The Persistence of Experimentally Induced Attitude Change." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 11(C):1–57.

Corbin, Juliet M., and Anselm Strauss. 1990. "Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria." *Qualitative Sociology* 13(1):3–21.

Cox, Oliver Cromwell. 1959. *Caste, Class, & Race: A Study in Social Dynamics*. Monthly Review Press.

DiAngelo, Robin. 2011. "White Fragility." *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy* 3(3).

DiAngelo, Robin J. 2018. *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism*. Beacon Press.

DiTomaso, Nancy. 2013. *The American Non-Dilemma: Racial Inequality Without Racism*. Russell Sage Foundation.

Du Bois, W. E. B. 1920. "The Souls of White Folk." *Monthly Review; New York* 55(6):44–58.

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Second Edition*. University of Chicago Press.

Essed, Philomena. 1990. *Everyday Racism: Reports from Women of Two Cultures*. Hunter House.

Essed, Philomena. 1991. *Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory*. SAGE.

Feagin, Joe R., and Eileen O'Brien. 2003. *White Men on Race: Power, Privilege, and the Shaping of Cultural Consciousness*. Beacon Press.

Fine, Michelle, Lois Weis, Judi Addelston, and Julia Marusza. 1997. "(In)Secure Times: Constructing White Working-Class Masculinities in the Late 20th Century." *Gender & Society* 11(1):52–68.

Frankenberg, Ruth. 1993. *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Fraser, James, and Edward Kick. 2000. “The Interpretive Repertoires of Whites on Race-Targeted Policies: Claims Making of Reverse Discrimination.” *Sociological Perspectives* 43(1):13–28.

Gallagher, Charles. 2000. “White Like Me? Methods, Meaning, and Manipulation in the Field of White Studies.” Pp. 67–92 in *Racing Research, Researching Race: Methodological Dilemmas in Critical Race Studies*, edited by F. W. Twine and J. Warren. NYU Press.

Gest, Justin. 2016. *The New Minority: White Working Class Politics in an Age of Immigration and Inequality*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Goffman, Erving. 1986. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Northeastern University Press ed. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Goffman, Erving. 1990. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday.

Gonyea, Don. 2017. “Majority Of White Americans Say They Believe Whites Face Discrimination.” *NPR*, October 24.

Gonzalez Van Cleve, Nicole. 2016. *Crook County: Racism and Injustice in America’s Largest Criminal Court*. Stanford University Press.

Harris, Cheryl I. 1993. “Whiteness as Property.” *Harvard Law Review* 106(8):1707–91.

Hart, Janet. 1992. “Cracking the Code: Narrative and Political Mobilization in the Greek Resistance.” *Social Science History* 16(4):631–68.

Heru, Alison M. 2001. “The Linkages Between Gender and Victimhood.” *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 47(3):10–20.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2016. *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*. New York: The New Press.

Hunter, Marcus Anthony. 2017. “Racial Physics or a Theory for Everything That Happened.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40(8):1173–83.

Jackman, Mary R., and Marie Crane. 1986. “‘Some of My Best Friends Are Black...’: Interracial Friendship and Whites’ Racial Attitudes.” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 50(4):459–86.

Kleinman, Sherryl, and Kenneth H. Kolb. 2011. “Traps on the Path of Analysis.” *Symbolic Interaction* 34(4):425–46.

Lacayo, Celia Olivia. 2017. “Perpetual Inferiority: Whites’ Racial Ideology toward Latinos.” *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 3(4):566–79.

Lamont, Michèle. 2000. *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and the Boundaries of Race, Class, and Immigration*. Harvard University Press.

Lewis, Amanda E. 2004. "'What Group?' Studying Whites and Whiteness in the Era of 'Color-Blindness.'" *Sociological Theory* 22(4):623–46.

Mayrl, Damon, and Aliya Saperstein. 2013. "When White People Report Racial Discrimination: The Role of Region, Religion, and Politics." *Social Science Research* 42(3):742–54.

McDermott, Monica. 2010. "Ways of Being White: Privilege, Perceived Stigma, and Transcendence." Pp. 415–38 in *Doing Race: 21 Essays for the 21st Century*, edited by H. R. Markus and P. M. L. Moya. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.

Mills, Charles. 1997. *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Orlans, Harold. 1992. "Affirmative Action in Higher Education." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 523(1):144–58.

Parham, Angel Adams. 2017. *American Routes: Racial Palimpsests and the Transformation of Race*. Oxford University Press.

Perrin, Andrew J., and Mosi Ifatunji. 2018. *2018 Survey of North Carolina Voters*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Perrin, Andrew J., and Katherine McFarland. 2011. "Social Theory and Public Opinion." *Annual Review of Sociology* 37(1):87–107.

Petty, Richard E., and John T. Cacioppo. 1996. *Attitudes And Persuasion: Classic And Contemporary Approaches*. Avalon Publishing.

Pincus, Fred L. 2000. "Reverse Discrimination vs. White Privilege: An Empirical Study of Alleged Victims of Affirmative Action." *Race and Society* 3(1):1–22.

Pincus, Fred L. 2002. "The Social Construction of Reverse Discrimination: The Impact of Affirmative Action on Whites." *Journal of Intergroup Relations* 38.

Pincus, Fred L. 2003. *Reverse Discrimination: Dismantling the Myth*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Reskin, Barbara. 2012. "The Race Discrimination System." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38(1):17–35.

Reskin, Barbara F. 1998. *The Realities of Affirmative Action in Employment*. American Sociological Association.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2011. *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World*. Oxford University Press.

Roberts, Dorothy. 2011. *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the Twenty-First Century*. New Press/ORIM.

Sherif, Muzafer, and Hadley Cantril. 1947. *The Psychology of Ego-Involvements*. Chapman & Hall, Limited.

Sidanius, Jim, Felicia Pratto, and Lawrence Bobo. 1996. “Racism, Conservatism, Affirmative Action, and Intellectual Sophistication: A Matter of Principled Conservatism or Group Dominance?” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 70(3):476–90.

Sleeter, Christine. 1994. “White Racism.” *Multicultural Education* 1(4):5.

Small, Mario Luis. 2009. “‘How Many Cases Do I Need?’: On Science and the Logic of Case Selection in Field-Based Research.” *Ethnography* 10(1):5–38.

Smith, Tom W., Michael Davern, Jeremy Freese, and Michael Hout. 2018. *General Social Surveys, 1972-2016 [Machine-Readable Data File]*. Chicago, IL: NORC at the University of Chicago.

Spradley, James P. 1980. *Participant Observation*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Taylor, Donald M., Stephen C. Wright, Fathali M. Moghaddam, and Richard N. Lalonde. 1990. “The Personal/Group Discrimination Discrepancy: Perceiving My Group, but Not Myself, to Be a Target for Discrimination.” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 16(2):254–62.

Taylor, Donald M., Stephen C. Wright, and L. E. Porter. 1993. “Dimensions of Perceived Discrimination: The Personal/Group Discrimination Discrepancy.” Pp. 233–55 in *The Psychology of Prejudice: The Ontario Symposium*, edited by M. P. Zanna and J. M. Olson. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Taylor, Marylee C., Maria Krysan, and Matthew Hall. 2017. “The Uncertain Impact of Anglo/Latino Contact on Anglos’ Immigration Policy Views: Awareness of Latinos’ Problems Is the Key.” *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 14(2):471–95.

West, Candace, and Don Zimmerman. 1987. “Doing Gender.” *Gender & Society* 1(2):125–51.

Williams, D. R., null Yan Yu, J. S. Jackson, and N. B. Anderson. 1997. “Racial Differences in Physical and Mental Health: Socio-Economic Status, Stress and Discrimination.” *Journal of Health Psychology* 2(3):335–51.

Williams, David R. 1999. “Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Health The Added Effects of Racism and Discrimination.” *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 896(1):173–88.

Wilson, Timothy D., and Sarah D. Hodges. 1992. “Attitudes as Temporary Constructions.” Pp. 37–65 in *The Construction of Social Judgments*, edited by L. Martin and A. Tesser. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Zaller, John. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press.